



Wildlife Recovery Lands Acquisition Programs Helps Secure 460 Acres For Springfish Critical Habitat

Funding from the 2003 US Fish & Wildlife Recovery Lands Acquisition Program Grant in combination with State of Nevada Question 1 Bond Program funds from the Department of Wildlife, helped in securing key habitats essential

for recovery of the threatened Railroad Valley springfish *Crenichthys nevadae*. The acquisition of 460 acres in Nye County, will protect source pools and/or outflows for three major spring systems containing identified recovery populations and critical habitat for the springfish.

The property will be retained in ownership by the State of Nevada and will be managed by the Department of Wildlife in conjunction with the adjacent Railroad Valley Wildlife Management Area. In addition, to the springfish, other important wildlife that will benefit from the project include shorebirds, waterfowl, and the sensitive Big Spring springsnail. Restoration strategies will be implemented in the coming months to restore spring and outflow systems, re-create historic outflow patterns, and enhance connectivity between spring fish populations.

The US Fish & Wildlife Recovery Lands Acquisition Program provides funds to states for acquisition of lands for endangered species and provides a means for private landowners to resolve endangered species issues on private lands. “The Railroad Valley springfish is the only fish species native to the thermal spring system of the Railroad Valley in Nye County. We feel fortunate that we were able to use these limited funds for acquiring this critical springfish habitat,” said Bob Williams, Field Supervisor for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office. “It would not have been possible without our project partners, the private land owner, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the Trust for Public Land.”

“The Trust for Public Land played a vital role in this project by skillfully negotiating the sale of this important property,” said Doug Hunt, Habitat Bureau Chief for the Nevada Department of Wildlife. “We look forward to working together on other important properties in Nevada where US Fish & Wildlife Recovery Lands Acquisition funds can be used in combination with NDOW’s Question 1 Bond funds.”

The Railroad Valley springfish still occur in six known historical habitats; four thermal springs near Lockes Ranch (Big, North, Hay Corral, Reynolds) and two thermal springs on the Duckwater Shoshone Indian Reservation (Big Warm and Little Warm). The average total length of the Railroad Valley springfish varies between 23-39mm (.9-1.5 inches), depending on the spring it occupies.